

Among the Books

"The Digressions of V." By Elihu Vedder. Houghton, Mifflin & Company, of Boston. \$6 net.

The pleasant intimacy and confidential tone of an autobiography written by a great American painter, will be indicated in the following extract from the introduction of the book, in which Mr. Vedder says:

"I have been asked so often by my friends this question: 'Why don't you write all these things?' that I have finally concluded to satisfy that which on their part is only good old-fashioned curiosity, by an exhibition on my part of good old-fashioned vanity; and so, not to keep them waiting, I will say at once that I have always deplored my lack of a Boswell, my experience being that full many a spark of wit is struck to flash unseen, and waste its brilliance on the family air. And this in spite of my having repeatedly called the family's attention to its deficiency in this respect. But suppose the Boswell, had I a Boswell, should slowly absorb me, as good old Dr. Johnson was absorbed by the original Boswell? Or suppose I should be like the block of marble in Michelangelo's sonnet. The more the marble wastes, the more the statue grows, and the statue should turn out to be the Boswell! What then! The moral is clear, be your own Boswell, so that if anything is to be absorbed it will remain on the premises."

At one time I thought it would be not only honest, but advisable, to warn the reader of what he was not to expect, such as, when traveling, extracts from Murray, or, on mentioning a great man, an account of his period, but I have concluded to satisfy that which on their part is only good old-fashioned curiosity, by an exhibition on my part of good old-fashioned vanity; and so, not to keep them waiting, I will say at once that I have always deplored my lack of a Boswell, my experience being that full many a spark of wit is struck to flash unseen, and waste its brilliance on the family air. And this in spite of my having repeatedly called the family's attention to its deficiency in this respect. But suppose the Boswell, had I a Boswell, should slowly absorb me, as good old Dr. Johnson was absorbed by the original Boswell? Or suppose I should be like the block of marble in Michelangelo's sonnet. The more the marble wastes, the more the statue grows, and the statue should turn out to be the Boswell! What then! The moral is clear, be your own Boswell, so that if anything is to be absorbed it will remain on the premises."

A delightful phase of Mr. Vedder's book is that which touches upon his association with such famous people as Walt Whitman, Charlotte Cushman, Ole Bull, Artemus Ward, Bayard Taylor, W. H. Rinehart, John La Farge, Walter Savage Landor and others. He describes a visit paid by him and the artist, William Hunt, to Ralph Waldo Emerson, at Concord, Mass., in which he speaks of Emerson as being all that was most sweet and gracious, though both friends felt aggrieved over a criticism made by Emerson in regard to American artists going to Europe, "Nature being the same on the banks of the Kennebec as on the banks of the Tiber."

Mr. Vedder's book is designated by him as "Digressions." But though it embodies many of his experiences as a traveler, with trenchant observations on people and things, the autobiography is primarily that of a painter. In it there are many of what he calls "digressions," and numerous accounts of his experiences in the Parisian art schools and his tribulations with models, of his painting landscapes "surrounded by a grinning crowd and hearing their unflattering comments or peevish remarks," of his solitary boy with a bad cold in his head, munching an apple, and of his transferring his allegiance from one "style" to another. It will give the average reader a truer glimpse of a painter's difficulties and methods than any of the same time spent by other artists through its veracity and insight.

Like the average number of great artists, Elihu Vedder underwent years of poverty and self-denial before coming into his present state. In regard to the same time spent by other artists through its veracity and insight. "If the Bohemian I belonged to in Paris had been divided into classes, I think I could have been returned as a member for Upper Bohemia. No! I was poor or rich—on the contrary, I was poor; but I had a washer-woman and I paid her bills. There were those who did not pay their bills, but they all meant to—except one. He it was who on leaving Bohemia, told me that he had been a member of the Bohemian club. 'I've forgotten one thing! I've forgotten to get trusted for a package of cigars.' However, he turned over a new leaf on reaching home, gave up art, and has become a very successful illustration artist."

Aside from the literary charm of Elihu Vedder's "The Digressions of V," the book is a masterpiece of the printer's art. It is lavishly illustrated from hundreds of reproductions of Mrs. Vedder's paintings and sketches, used as full-page illustrations and as text-cuts in such a way as not only to embellish, but actually to illustrate the text. There are four full-page cuts in color; but the majority are carefully reproduced and printed with the text upon the text-paper in a way that blends with harmonious with the text itself. Another interesting feature of the book are the poetic half-titles, written and embellished by the author himself, which precede the chapters. In addition to this, Mr. Vedder has made for this book, as for his successful illustrations, a collection of the "Rubaiyat" of Omar Khayyam, designs for the cover, for the end papers, headpieces and tail-pieces, so that, in short, the complete expression of one of the most interesting personalities of the time.

In appreciating the importance of Elihu Vedder's "The Digressions of V," it is well to remember that he stands in the front rank of American painters. He is an accomplished artist of forty-five years, standing in the National Academy of Design, a member of the Society of American Artists, and a member of the Society of Mural Decorators. Five of the decorative panels in the Washington Congressional Library and the mosaic Minerva there are his work.

"Memories and Impressions of Helena Modjeska." An autobiography. The Macmillan Company, of New York. \$4.

This splendid volume presents a very

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new and unexpected view of the pleasures and pains of stage life; that life which is usually veiled by the magic of the footlights and has the glamour of rouge and powder to conceal its actual conditions from the ever-curious public. In the reminiscences of the great Polish actress, who was the wonder and admiration of an earlier generation and who retained her power of fascinating playgoers as long as she remained on the stage, we are brought very close to the real joys and sorrows of life behind the scenes. The hard work, often followed by unfortunate accident and bitter chagrin; the unexpected delight of "making a hit" or "drawing a full house" where there were only gloomy forebodings as to the success of a new play; the triumphs of a "first night" and the physical and mental exhaustion which often came closely on the heels of that triumph, all these real experiences are set before us in this wonderfully varied life-story of Madame Modjeska, making it a book to be read and reread with ever-growing interest by every one who cares for the exciting adventures of unusual people.

It must command a larger public than the general autobiographies of actors and actresses, because it covers a wider field and embraces anecdotes and reminiscences of most of the celebrated actors, authors and artists of the past half century, including many well known people of our own day who are still with us. Poland, England, America, of the West and East are the chief backgrounds, and all the people who are brought before us are the real characters as we might know them to-day, were we fortunate enough to make one of the delightful circle.

In referring to her Southern tours during the "Fame" she fulfilled the long engagements in the United States, Madame Modjeska writes: "I spent several pleasant weeks in the South, and met many descendants of the aristocratic families of Virginia. They were all most charming in their hospitality."

"In many old houses known for opulence in the past, we noticed reduced circumstances, verging on poverty, but borne with the dignity of high breeding. My heart went out to them in sympathy and admiration."

"One day we were invited to a reception on a man-of-war in Norfolk, by Miss Lilla Seawell, who, being a granddaughter of an admiral, enjoyed a great popularity in the navy. At the close of our visit he put a very clean, pretty, pink and white pig, with a ribbon around its neck. Miss Seawell informed me that the animal was a mascot and performed so many stunts that they called it 'Modjeska.'"

Madame Modjeska settled herself on Bay Island, in East Newport, Cal., a few months previous to her death in April of 1910. Here, in closing her autobiography, she says:

"I have done what I could for art and myself; I certainly could not do it over again, and as for the excitement and applause, I never attached much value to either. What I loved best in my profession was the work, but the moment I realized I was losing my buoyancy and my quick perception, I left the stage without regret."

Madame Modjeska had a passionate love for her native land, Poland, and a passionate belief in its vitality, as evidenced by her civilization and art. Her funeral oration, delivered at Cracow, July 18, 1910, voices the devotion of her compatriots toward their great countrywoman in the following words:

"In the name of those to whom thou wert an example unreach, an unparalleled mistress, an exquisite friend and a sincere colleague, accept our homage and good-bye."

"And in return let thy genius be the guardian of the Polish stage, and keep it in the light it hath attained, and may the pilgrim artists visiting thy grave drink as they would from the spring of Castal—thy strength, example—so that the thankful hordes of generations accompany thee to the land of eternity and the Pantheon of Immortality."

The photographic reproductions of

Modjeska as she appeared in her different stage costumes, and other taken of her at different periods of her life, together with those of many of the most beautiful actresses and famous actors who were her contemporaries, form most of the book, which is an interesting feature of her autobiography.

"Life of Alexander Hamilton." By Allan McLane Hamilton. Charles Scribner's Sons, of New York, through the Bell Book and Stationery Company, of Richmond.

Basing his book chiefly upon original family letters written by Alexander Hamilton and members of his family, the purpose of the writer is given as utilizing a number of these to throw light upon Hamilton's private life and career as a soldier, lawyer and statesman.

This very interesting work contains a history of Alexander Hamilton's origin and parentage, dwells at length on his personal characteristics, estimates his powers as a writer and orator, relates the details of his meeting Elizabeth Schuyler and their courtship and marriage, explains how his choice of law as a profession was made and narrates many interesting episodes in his legal career; describes his charming family life in New York, tells of his financial labors during the years from 1790 to 1800, of the time he spent in England on ground extending from 111st to 145th Street, New York; to his early association with Aaron Burr and the unfriendly relations that led to the duel between the two July 12, 1804, and Hamilton's death. Appendices and an index render the book thoroughly complete.

The life of Alexander Hamilton is so closely interwoven with the early history and government of the American republic that the student and reader of the causes which have made the American nation what it is, cannot afford to neglect the life of Hamilton largely into account. But in Allan McLane Hamilton's book there are many letters hitherto unpublished bearing on the intimate life of the author's ancestor, apart from his public service.

Referring to the grave in the yard of the City of New York, of the first Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, his historian says: "After the growth of more than a century, our country, with all its present greatness, calmly weighs the part played by those early patriots who brought into the world the United States, and have elapsed into the past. The Constitution of the United States, it is not saying too much to assert that to Hamilton belongs most of the credit for its preparation and adoption, and that it is to-day the best monument of his greatness."

"The Sword in the Mountains." By Alice MacGowan. G. P. Putnam's Sons, of New York. \$1.35 net.

The Tennessee mountain region around and about Chickamauga and Chattanooga, and scenes connected with the struggle of Chattanooga, the stubbornly contested battle of Chickamauga and Lookout Mountain bring back to mind the sorrows and tragedies of the war period between the years 1861-65, when "The Sword in the Mountains" was written. The author is a Richmond girl and the heroine of a pretty love story, beginning with a meeting between her and the hero—fictitiously called Rob Roy—in front of Leigh Street Baptist Church.

The young author has shown no little ingenuity in composition and workmanship, and is to be congratulated upon his being able, not only to write, but to publish his novelette.

"The Boy Ranchers of Puget Sound." By Harold Bindloss. Frederick A. Stokes Company, of New York, through the Bell Book and Stationery Company, of Richmond. \$1.50.

This boy's story by the author of many popular novels, tells how Frank Whitney, at the age of sixteen, when thrown upon his own resources, feels the need of a home and goes out to seek his fortune. He begins work on a ranch bordering on Puget Sound, where he and the rancher's son have an interesting life learning all the ins and outs of ranching, and in spare moments go swimming, canoeing or shooting in the wild country about and dream of the time when they will have a ranch of their own.

Not long, however, are they left without stirring adventure. A mysterious dark schooner makes its appearance off the coast, and the rancher's life is in peril. The boys do some detective work and soon become involved in a conflict with smugglers of opium and Chinamen. This finally develops into a siege and a pitched battle, from which the boys derive an advantage leading to a satisfactory conclusion of the book.

From the same publishers through the same Richmond firm have been also received "Masters of the Wheatlands" by Harold Bindloss, "Young Duck Shooters in Camp" by Frank E. Kellogg and "Dick Among the Lumberjacks" by A. W. Dimock. These books are priced, respectively, at \$1.30, \$1.25 and \$1.50.

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"The Social Buccaneer." By Frederic S. Isham. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, of Indianapolis. \$1.50.

Mr. Isham's new book has to do with New York and to-day. The hero of his new book is a wholly engaging, indeed irresistible Raffles or Dupin, but he is a new kind of detective, one who, like Chatterfield Bruce, a young man of "first family blood," of large inherited fortune, who he whimsically declines to touch, of keen ability in affairs and generous in charities, is suspected of stealing a famous rope of pearls belonging to the daughter of a millionaire employer. Whether he did steal them is for Mr. Isham's readers to find out. But Marjorie Wood, beauty and belle, who has been attracted to Bruce, both by the mystery surrounding his personality and movements, and by his large gifts to her charity, and whose life he has saved, comes to believe that he has stolen them and keeps on loving him just the same. The author advances on behalf of his hero the ingenious theory that what is taken from the rich expressly to give to the poor is not theft in the ordinary reprehensible sense, but a quixotic kind of justice. One can foresee as a result that the story will not only entertain, but that it may provoke discussion of its decidedly novel ethics.

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preserved a fresh beauty and spiritual ideals through late hours and the pressure of convention; Sir Archibald Bainford, heavily English, recalling the bad lord in "Half a Chance"; his secretive half-orphan secretary, who knew them all as quickly as they were introduced. But the familiarity is pleasant, nor does the reader object to the setting and accessories of wealth and leisure, the motor car and the country house, amid which he finds himself.

The actual denouement of the story is dramatically deferred until Marjorie and Bruce appear together in the Chinese opera, "The Beggar Prince." The gentleman-thief has quite clearly not yet played out his part in our romantic fiction, and this engaging variation from the conventional type is sure of hearty and admiring welcome.

Hopkinson Smith's New Novel.

The quality called "atmosphere" in a story, the impression that it conveys of reality, of sincerity, of environment, is as vivid as the lives of men. No story tells of our day better succeeds at the very outset in creating an atmosphere than F. Hopkinson Smith, whose "Fortunes of Oliver Horn" was so greatly admired when it appeared as a serial in Scribner's Magazine, and whose new novel, "Kennedy Square," begins at November.

"The old square was in Baltimore, a place of birds and trees and flowers. Giant magnolias filled the air with their fragrance, and climbing roses played hide-and-seek among the railings of the rotting fence."

Mr. Smith always introduces his readers to a group of people that are worth knowing, and he has the faculty of putting them before us in a manner that at once makes us curious and enlists the sympathies. The time of the new story is set back some years before the war, and it begins with a charming picture of the return of a Southern gentleman from a hunting trip and with a dramatic incident that leads at once into the love story that the author knows so well how to deal with. There is an element of idealism, a cheerful and genial appreciation of character, a spirit of irradiating optimism pervading the story. No one better understands the underlying tenderness that so often attended master and man, father and son, in the old South or the pride of race and often wilful, blind selfishness that has been the cause of much unhappiness in the late past. The story is a remarkable and intensely dramatic scene, in which Edgar Poe appears. There is no lack of movement; the story goes on rapidly and with constantly varied incident.

A Unique Production.

A young Richmond boy, Preston Dean, of North Twenty-fifth Street, is the author of a romance which he has entitled "Nelle Gray."

The Tennessee mountain region around and about Chickamauga and Chattanooga, and scenes connected with the struggle of Chattanooga, the stubbornly contested battle of Chickamauga and Lookout Mountain bring back to mind the sorrows and tragedies of the war period between the years 1861-65, when "The Sword in the Mountains" was written. The author is a Richmond girl and the heroine of a pretty love story, beginning with a meeting between her and the hero—fictitiously called Rob Roy—in front of Leigh Street Baptist Church.

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Dr. Eggleston's Book.

Dr. Edward Eggleston, of Amelia Courthouse, is hard at work upon an exhaustive and scientific work on "The American Negro." The doctor has recently given up his work in Richmond and removed to Amelia in order that he may devote his whole time and attention to the subject upon which he is engaged. He belongs to a family of writers, and has had unusual opportunities for observation and preparation along the lines of the new question, and we will be looked forward to with interest.

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search for buried treasure and a spice of romance to their adventures. In "Dick Among the Lumberjacks," the adventures of Dick and his chum Ned in the great forests of Canada are one of the most thrilling and wholesome tales for boys that can be imagined. They are sent North by Ned's father, and find themselves admitted to a band of manly young survivors and foresters working for a lumber company and known as "forestry boys," because of their adventurous escapades.

"The Winning Ten." By Edward Mott Woolley. D. Appleton & Company, of New York.

This is the story of a Montana boy who went from ranch life to New York and carried his clean principles along with him. Also his determination to be a winner in the game of life, which admitted him to membership in "The Winning Ten." The story is one of great interest and a healthy moral, one which makes it specially suitable for a boy's reading.

From the same publishers has been received "J. W. Muller's 'Rulers of the Surf,' a story in which boys will specially delight. It tells of the work of the surfmen at life-saving stations during winter gales and howling storms. The price of the book is \$1.50.

Lieutenant Hugh S. Johnson, who wrote "William of West Point," a story of West Point under the old code, has out a new book, published by D. Appleton & Company at \$1.50, which is called "Williams on Service," and gives number of adventurous experiences undergone by Williams in the Philippines. These adventures are the kind that are useful as well as enjoyable for boys, and contribute largely to their education.

"The Horsemen of the Plains." By Joseph A. Altshuler. The Macmillan Company, of New York. \$1.50.

This is a story of the great Cheyenne War and the part played in it by an Omaha lad who went West with a band of Red Arrows to hunt for the Omahas. The Omaha lad did heroic service against Indian attacks, and not long after the battle of the Arickaree, he was taken into army service by General Custer. And when the Cheyenne was over, he went to find a band of his old comrades from whom he had been separated, and whom he was rejoiced to find once more.

From the same firm has been received "Alongshore," by Stephen Reynolds, price \$1.25 net, a book where man and the sea face one another, and much information is given about the winds, seasons, clouds and tides; in fact, about everything which in any way touches the life of a fisherman.

"The Hollow Tree Snowed-In Book." By Albert Bigelow Paine. Harcourt & Bros., of New York, publishers. \$1.50.

The stories in this book continue the histories previously begun of the "Hollow Tree People" and their friends of the "Hollow Tree." It begins with a Christmas dinner, in the "Hollow Tree" and the relation to the after-dinner company of Mr. Dog's adventures at the circus. This is the first "Snowed-In" story, and it is fine. So the winter comes, and it is fine, and that will make the best gift to whom the "Snowed-In Book" goes glad indeed to have received it.

The Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

As the writer of the seventh son of a prophet, but recently I have had an exceptionally favorable opportunity to look into the state of affairs in several States, and think I am in position to give some election news several days in advance of the election.

Dr. Woodrow Wilson will be elected by a large majority Governor of New Jersey. In 1912 he will be elected Governor of the United States.

For the next twenty years a Southern man will be elected Vice-President of the United States, not because they are Southern, wise men North and South are beginning to see that the best way to save this country from anarchy and ruin.

Dix of New York will be elected by a large majority Governor of New York. In 1912 he will be elected Governor of the United States.

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tract of land, and much more will be needed, and fifty years' time for the trees to grow, the size of those the Richmond people are willing to cut down on the college campus.

Not only from a health standpoint, but from a point of beauty, it is more desirable for tourists to prolong their stay; so we should struggle to hold what we have and not let it slip from our very grasp.

MRS. I. H. K.

The Captive Eagle.

(Suggested on seeing an eagle in captivity.)

Another day has passed, another sun has set; The stars are bright overhead, the grass with dewdrops wet. Far through the forest dark I hear the night birds cry: They are calling me to come—oh! how I long to fly.

Once I was happy and free, my nest on the mountain high; My playmate was the bright, bright; no thought of danger nigh. The little ones spread their quivering wings and cried aloud for food, I must, alas! have far down in the darkening wood.

Leaving my mate to guard the nest, I went in my own way, straight to the forest I flew—I had no wish to roam. But meant to get to satisfy the babies' cries, I found what I came to seek—but what is this, oh! why?

When I try to rise and fly something holds me fast; I have tried and struggled and beat my wings, but in vain. Helpless and bleeding they found me held in the cruel snare. Oh! how I begged my captors then in my pitiful, dumb despair.

Alas! it was all in vain; they wanted an eagle to show. They hung me in the iron cage—Ah, could they only know. Surely my miserable plight would touch some pitying heart. 'Only an eagle, why should we care? Let it writhe and smart.'

'Quite an addition to the zoo; splendid specimen,' they say; 'People will come and look and pay, so what care they if it is dead?' They are so sure from beating the cruel bars. The eagle heart with longing torn for the home beneath the stars?

Only an eagle, 'emblem of freedom,' caged and left to pine In helpless longing day by day, for some where the sunbeams shine: Beating its wings 'gainst the prison bars, poor prisoner; all the while the people pass by, look on, see its misery—and smile.

Oh Thou who see'st the sparrow's fall, look down in pity on me; A suffering, helpless prisoner, and set, oh, set me free. For you at home, I pray, to my home in the rocky crevices, Let me breathe the pure air, with the sunbeams play, once more in my old home nest.

Let me spread my torn and bruised wings once more in the blessed light. And fly again through the boundless blue to the skies so fair and bright. Escape from this living tomb, to be free and happy at last. The suffering and gloom and misery—forever and ever past—Let me go, let me go, let me go, to whom the "Snowed-In Book" goes glad indeed to have received it.

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